

THE
MAGDALENS:
AN
ELEGY.

By the AUTHOR of the NUNNERY.



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MAGDALEN

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[First Sixteen]

1490. Le. 9.
TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

MARY LEPEL,

Baroness Dowager HERVEY of ICKWORTH.

THIS

ELEGY

IS, WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT,

INSCRIBED,

BY

HER LADYSHIP'S

OBLIGED AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

TO

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

MARY LEE

Broughton, Harvey, & Co. of New York

THIS

Y G L E



WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT

DECEMBER

NEW YORK

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THE AUTHOR



T H E
M A G D A L E N S.

L O! kneeling at yon Rail with pensive Air,
A num'rous Train of suppliant Nymphs I spy :
Their youthful Cheek is pal'd with early Care,
And Sorrow dwells in their dejected Eye.

Hark, They attune a solemn plaintive Lay,
Where Grief with Harmony delights to meet :
Not *Philomela* from her lonely Spray
Trills her clear Note, more querulously sweet.

Are

((6))

Are These the Fair who wont with conscious Grace
Proud *Ranelagh's* resplendent Round to tread?
Shine in the studied Luxury of Dress?
And vie in Beauty with the high-born Maid?

The smiling Scenes of Pleasure they forsake,
Obey no more Amusement's idle Call,
Nor mingling with the Sons of Mirth partake
The Treat voluptuous, or the festive Ball.

For sober Weeds they change their bright Attire,
Of the Pearl Bracelet strip the graceful Arm,
Veil the white Breast, that lately heav'd Desire,
And thrill'd with tender exquisite Alarm:

Unbraid the cunning Tresses of the Hair,
And each well-fancied Ornament remove,
The glowing Gem, the glitt'ring Solitaire—
The costly spoils of prostituted Love!

Yet

Yet Beauty lingers on their mournful Brow,
 Unwilling to forsake the Tear-dew'd Cheek,
 Which scarcely blushing with a languid Glow
 Partakes a Softness delicately meek.

No more compare them to the stately Flow'r,
 Whose painted Foliage wantons in the Gale :
 They look the Lily drooping from the Show'r,
 Or the pale Vi'let sick'ning in the Vale.

Let not the Prude with acrimonious Taunt,
 Upbraid the humble Tenants of this Dome,
 That Pleasure's rosy Bow'r they us'd to haunt,
 And in the Walks of loose-rob'd Dalliance roam.

If fond of Empire, and of Conquest vain,
 They frequent Vot'ries to their Altars drew,
 Yet blaz'd those Altars to the Fair ones' Bane,
 The Idol They, and They the Victim too !

Some

Some in this sacred Mansion may reside,
 Who lost their Parents in their Infant Years,
 And hapless Orphans! trod without a Guide
 The Maze of Life perplext with guileful Snares.

Some, that encircled by the Great and Rich,
 Were won by Wiles, and deep-designing Art,
 By splendid Bribes, and soft persuasive Speech,
 Of Pow'r to cheat the young unguarded Heart.

Some, on whom Beauty breath'd her choicest Bloom,
 Whilst adverse Stars all other Gifts remov'd,
 Who fled from Mis'ry and a Dungeon's Gloom,
 To Scenes their inborn Virtue disapprov'd.

What tho' Their Youth imbib'd an early Stain:
 Now gilded by the Rays of new-born Fame,
 A second Innocence they here obtain,
 And Nun-clad Penance heals their wounded Name.

So

So the young Myrtles nipt by treach'rous Cold,
 (While still the Summer yields his golden Store,)
 In shelt'ring Walls their tender Leaves unfold,
 And breathe a sweeter Fragrance than before.

Tho' white-wing'd Peace protect this calm Abode,
 Tho' each tumultuous Passion be suppress'd,
 Still Recollection wears a Sting to goad,
 Still arrowy Remorse afflicts their Breast.

The tort'ring Hour of Mem'ry this may prove,
 Who wrapt in pensive Secrecy forlorn,
 Sits musing on the Pledges of her Love,
 Expos'd to chilly Want, and grinning Scorn :

Left by their Father in the Time of Need,
 Just in th' unfolding Blossom of their Age !
 " Was this, Seducer, this the promis'd Meed ?"
 She cries : Then sinks beneath Affliction's Rage.

B

Another

Another mourns her Fall with Grief sincere,
 Whom tranquil Reason tells she's shun'd, disdain'd,
 Repuls'd as vile by those who held her dear,
 Who call'd her once Companion, Sister, Friend.

That recollects the Day, when lost to Shame
 She fondly sacrific'd her vestal Charms :
 Resign'd the Virgin's for an Harlot's Name,
 And left a Parent's for a Spoiler's Arms.

Imagination pencils to her Mind
 The Father's Rage, the Mother's softer Woe :
 Unhappy Pair ! to that Distress consign'd
 A Child can give, a Parent only know.

The dreadful Picture fixes Sorrow's Dart,
 Fond filial Passions in her Breast revive :
 She feels keen Anguish preying at her Heart,
 To Nature's Pangs too sensibly alive.

(11)

If this, or similar tormenting Thought,
Cling to their Soul, when pensively alone,
For Youth's Offence, for Love's alluring Fault,
Say, do they not sufficiently atone?

O mock not then their penitential Woes,
Thou, who may'st deign to mark this humble Theme,
Nor seek with foul Derision to expose
And give to Infamy their tainted Name.

Nor deem me one of Melancholy's Train;
If anxious for the Sorrow-wedded Fair,
(Tho' little skilful of poetic Strain
Whose pleasing Music takes the tuneful Ear)

I steal impatient from the idle Throng,
The roving, gay, Companions of my Age,
To temper with their Praise my artless Song,
And soft-ey'd Pity in their Cause engage.

'Tis

'Tis Virtue's Task to soothe Affliction's Smart,
To join in Sadness with the Fair distressed:
Wake to another's Pain the tender Heart,
And move to Sympathy the feeling Breast.

THE END.



